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MADAME ROLAND

MADAME ROLAND

A Biographical Study

By GERALD TATE



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PREFACE

No other woman, probably, has exercised such a powerful influence in the world of politics during the stormy period of the French Revolution as Madame Roland, the wife of the virtuous and pedantic Minister of the Interior under Dumouriez in the year 1792. An ardent student from her birth, she had become acquainted with every form of literature, philosophy, religion, natural history and even economics, all having engaged her attention at different periods of her life. But it was from the study of political science, above all, that she had derived most pleasure, Plutarch and the melancholy Rousseau being her favourite authors. While Plutarch had instilled into her those republican principles which she was destined to put into practice later in life, Rousseau, indeed, be-

came nothing short of her idol. The extraordinary influence which his principal work, his "Contrat Social," exercised on the minds of society during the years preceding the outbreak of the revolution must not, indeed, be underestimated; we find in it the Genevese philosopher's conception of the ideal society, of an eighteenth century Utopia containing, indeed, those very principles of liberty, equality and fraternity which were to be so readily adopted by the Constituent Assembly. Individuals incapable of appreciating Rousseau's "Nouvelle Heloise," Madame Roland would treat with the utmost contempt, declaring that they possessed "minds of mud." From the year of her marriage in 1780, this ardent republican began to assist her husband, then an inspector of manufactures, in all his literary work, drawing up reports for him and dealing with all his commercial correspondence. In the compilation of his *Encyclopédie Nouvelle* she was of invaluable assistance, while she be-

gan to even contribute newspaper articles for a republican journal entitled "Le bourgeois de Lyon," to which the austere Roland would subscribe his signature. In this manner the Rolands began to correspond with the more influential editors of the Parisian journals, with the genial Brissot and even with leaders of the most advanced opinions. The outbreak of the revolution on the 10th of August found them still at Lyons; none, indeed, were more prepared to embrace the new order of things than this inspector of manufactures and his wife. They went to reside at Paris in the year 1791, and the following year Monsieur Roland, much to his surprise, was selected by Louis XVI to be Minister of the Interior. Thenceforth the charming little salon on the third floor of the Hotel Britannique, Rue Guénégaud, became a veritable hotbed of political intrigue, with the imperious Madame Roland as Mistress of the Ceremonies. To this political shrine were invited the ill-fated Girondist depu-

ties, first and foremost their old friend Brissot, Grangeneuve, Louvet, Gensonné—and later her gallant lover, Buzot, François Buzot, her confidential agent in hazardous undertakings, the participator in all her intrigues, with whom, incidentally, her relations were always purely platonic. From the first Madame Roland was the heart and soul of the Girondist party; while Brissot was entrusted with the direction of the foreign policy of the nation, she assumed the management of home affairs, drawing up in secret (invariably *à la Rousseau*) many of the decrees subsequently proposed in the Convention.

Although the political ambitions of Madame Roland were indeed most noble, they were impractical, and therefore incapable of realization. In her enthusiasm for the ideal republic she sincerely hoped to introduce the manners and customs of ancient Greece and Rome into a state of society steeped in financial chaos and distracted by civil strife. Possibly, as Louis

PREFACE

v

Blanc asserts, "*Elle avait le courage d' un grand homme,*" a statement which is amply verified by her noble conduct while being conveyed from the Conciergerie to the Place de la Révolution, but she was far from being a judge of men. One of her characteristics was her intense dislike of the royal family. While she detested Antoinette, she referred to Louis XVI on more than one occasion as "her fool of a husband." When one of her husband's colleagues pointed out to her the indignities to which the queen and the dauphin were being subjected during their imprisonment in the Temple, she turned her back on him, merely remarking that there were more important things at stake during that momentous period than a mere woman and child. As a letter writer, she was distinctly superior to Mesdames de Sevigné or de Maintenon, while she had received a more thorough education than either. During her imprisonment she wrote her principal work, her "Appeal to impartial pos-

terity," "Portraits and Anecdotes" dealing with various Girondist celebrities, and five love letters to François Buzot, which have proved of no small interest to lovers of romance. It must be remembered that these writings were accomplished under the most unfavorable conditions. Scribbling furtively under the eye of her gaoler, Madame Roland's train of thought would be interrupted at odd moments during the day by the harsh commands of the military, proceeding from the courtyard below, during the night, by the drunken laughter and cries of members of the theatrical profession in the adjoining cell. The original manuscript, several leaves of which are blotted with tears, may still be seen in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

Almost all of the Girondist deputies died on the scaffold, the last of them being Barbaroux, who, after in vain endeavouring to commit suicide, was taken to Bordeaux in an insensible condition, where, his identity having been ascertained, he was immedi-

ately guillotined on the 25th of June, 1794. Fortunately the Reign of Terror came to an end a month or two later with the fall of Robespierre. The Girondist party had been, indeed, extremely unfortunate. It had brought about the fall of the throne (by means of the famous letter addressed to the king, supposed to have been written by Madame Roland) and had instituted a form of government on an essentially social democratic basis, only to bring about the ascendancy of a less moderate faction, which had ultimately brought about its destruction.

A few days before Madame Roland was dragged to the scaffold, she had confessed to her old friend Monsieur Champagneux that her greatest ambition had been to write the annals of her times and to become the Macaulay of her country. This bold ambition, indeed, might very possibly have been realized, had she been fortunate enough to survive that dark epoch.

Her murder will always go down to pos-

terity as the greatest crime of the Reign of Terror, for hers, undoubtedly, was one of the most honourable and noble characters of the revolutionary period, while the unfortunate suicide of her husband deprived France of a minister whose probity and administrative ability might have saved that country from deplorable financial chaos and sanguinary anarchy.

New York, December 31st.

MADAME ROLAND

CHAPTER I

MARIE-JEANNE PHLIPON, destined to become the famous Madame Roland, was born on March 17, 1754, in a house on the Quai de l'Horloge, near the Pont Neuf. Her mother was a certain Margaret Bimont, a lady "with a heavenly mind and a most enchanting countenance," while her father was named Pierre Gatien Phlipon, the descendant of an old Touraine family; an engraver by profession, he seems to have been a man of some talent, for he possessed "*un assez grand nombre d'ouvriers*" and had the honor of being "*graveur de Monsieur le comte d'Artois*." In addition to being an engraver, Pierre Gatien took up painting and enamelling, but the fire which it was necessary to em-

ploy in the latter process injured his sight; "he confined himself to the first, therefore, the profits of which were moderate."

Some authors have given Madame Roland's name, before her marriage took place, as *Manon* Phlipon. This is an error, however, for this was nothing more than a "*nom familier*." In her memoirs we find the following: "I hear, with a kind of trembling, this word Mademoiselle substituted, with solemn and heart-rending dignity, for the pleasing name of child, or the elegant appellation of Manon. *Oui, Manon: c'est ainsi qu'on m' appelait*. I sympathize with the lovers of romance. Certainly the name is not noble, it is quite unsuitable for a heroine of the nobler type."

In the documents relating to her trial before the revolutionary tribunal, she is described as Marie-Jeanne Phlipon, age 39, residing in the *Rue de la Harpe, Paris*. An ardent student, with a perfect passion for perusing books of every description,

Marie Jeanne was in the habit of rising at 5 o'clock in the morning, when the rest of the household was asleep, in order to study her lessons. With such assiduity and application for study, it is not surprising that her tutors became most attached to her; the discreet Monsieur Marchand, who taught her to write, and instructed her in history and geography, to whom she gave the nickname of Mr. Demure; talkative little Cajou, her music master, in turn a soldier, a deserter, a Capuchin friar, a clerk in a counting-house, and lastly a vagrant, arriving at Paris with his wife and children without a penny in his pocket. This little gentleman, she informs us, borrowed money from her parents, which he quickly spent; never returned her collection of lessons by Bordier, from which he compiled his "Elements of Music" and published under his own name, eventually repairing to Russia, leaving many a Parisian tradesman eagerly awaiting the day of his return

We must not omit to mention Mozon, her dancing-master, an honest Savoyard, very ugly, with a large wart on his right cheek; Mignard, her master for the guitar, a sort of Spanish Colossus, with hands like those of Esau, "who, in gravity, ceremoniousness, and rhodomontade, was inferior to none of his countrymen." Her mother seems to have understood her better than her father, who was hasty in manner, with the result that Marie-Jeanne was slow to obey him. "If, despot-like, he attempted to punish me, his gentle little daughter was converted into a lion."

On more than one occasion she bit the "*maître graveur sur métaux*" hard in the thigh as he bent her across his knee and smacked her. These unpleasant scenes, which caused Madame Phlipon much agitation, did not occur very often. For the most part, Phlipon was a kind and gentle father, instructing his little daughter in the art of drawing and taking her out for walks.

The study of art, we find, was not encouraged by her mother: "I would not have her become a painter," she said; "it may lead her, from the nature of the study, to connections which we may not approve."

Seeing that his daughter was so extremely fond of books, Phlipon used to present her with works suitable (as he considered) for a young girl. He taught her the art of engraving also, for on the birthdays of her relations she usually made a present of "some neat copper-plate engraving, consisting of a nosegay and some complimentary verses," written with the assistance of Mr. Demure.

The small library in the house on the *Quai de l'Horloge* was soon exhausted by this little student. If unable to procure a new book, she would remain content with running through those she had already read. In this manner she gained more than a superficial knowledge of Appian's Civil Wars and a history of Turkey. The *Roman Comique de Scarron* and

the *Memoirs of Mlle. de Montpensier* engaged her attention also. One day she found a book on heraldry, with coloured plates, and instantly determined to master this interesting subject; and with some success, too, for she was enabled to point out the faults which Phlipon had made in engraving a seal.

“On this subject,” she declares, “I became his oracle, and I never misled him.” Every kind of literature seems to have interested her; works on travel, drama, poetry, the Bible, the Lives of the Saints—and, above all, Plutarch. “Plutarch,” she informs us, “seemed to be exactly the food that suited my mind. I shall never forget the Lent of 1763, at which time I was nine years of age, when I carried it to church instead of my prayer-book. From that period I may date the impressions and ideas that rendered me a republican, without dreaming at the time that I should ever become a member of a republic.”

About the same time that Plutarch en-

gaged her attention she read "Telemachus" and "Jerusalem Delivered." "The tender Fenelon moved my heart, and Tasso fired my imagination," she writes. It must not be imagined, however, that Manon was permitted to neglect her domestic duties at this time; she was frequently called upon by her mother to help in the kitchen, to make an omelet or salad, a task which she was quite capable of, we imagine, for we are told that "she could prepare her own dinner as dexterously as Philopœmen cut wood."

It is with sentiments of alarm that Manon hears her preparation for her first communion being discussed by her parents. She procures books of devotion from wherever she may obtain them, with the result that her mind is entirely obsessed by religious ideas; daily her life becomes more retired, and in person she becomes more humble and timid. She realizes the solemnity of the occasion and wishes to be enlightened on the mystic

ceremonies of the church. Impressed after reading "The Lives of the Saints," she feels she would like to change her mode of life—to breathe the atmosphere of the solitude and seclusion of the cloister.

One evening, after supper, she tearfully begged her parents to place her in a convent, a request with which her parents, after some deliberation, eventually comply with. We now find her on the 7th of May, 1765, with the *Dames de la Congrégation*, in the *Rue Neuve Saint Etienne*, *Faubourg St. Marcel*, with whom she was destined to spend a very beneficial year. In the convent, Manon soon gained the esteem and affection of the entire sisterhood; first, it was the kind and cheerful Angelica Boufflers, called St. Agatha by the other nuns, who would permit Manon to occupy her cell, with its little singing bird, during her absence, so that she might read her books there; then peevish Mother Gertrude with her fourscore years, who would smilingly offer a slice of cake or

some sweetmeats, after reproving Sister Agatha for being so attached to her. On Sundays she would be taken for a walk in the public gardens by her parents, from whom she would part with tears of affection.

Shortly after her admission to the convent she became acquainted with two young ladies from Amiens, the sisters Henriette and Sophie Cannet. With the younger sister Sophie, a girl three years older than herself, Manon seems to have been extremely friendly. Pensive and reserved, fond of study, yet always eager to discuss and analyze the intricate problems of life, she found in her the ideal companion. Her correspondence with Henriette and Sophie Cannet, from 1772 to 1786, we are told, was "the origin of her taste for writing."

After having stayed a year with the "*Dames de la Congrégation*," Manon went to stay with her grandmother, an agreeable old lady of sixty-five, de-

lighting in the society of young people, at her residence in the *Ile St. Louis*, the domestic duties of this household devolve on her grandmother's sister, Mademoiselle Rotisset, called by the name of Angelica, a simple, pious lady, whose principal occupation was knitting. Here the little student was not slow to examine the collection of books in Madame Phlipon's library; the *Philotée* of *St. Francis de Sales* she found interesting, while the writings of Bossuet gave her much to reflect over.

One day she is taken by her grandmother to visit a grand lady, of decidedly aristocratic mien, with a predilection for rouge in spite of her sixty odd years.

"Ah, Mademoiselle Rotisset, good morning to you," cried Madame de Boismorel in a loud, cold tone, as she rose to meet us." ("Mademoiselle? So my grandmother is mademoiselle in this house.") "Upon my honour I am extremely glad to see you. And this fine child is your grand-

daughter? She will be a smart woman. Come here, my dear. Sit down by my side. She is a little bashful. What age is your daughter, Mademoiselle Rotisset? She is a little brown, to be sure, but she has a very good skin; she will grow fairer; and then what a shape! I will lay my life that hand must be a lucky one. Did you ever venture in the lottery?"

"Never, Madam; I am not fond of gaming."

"So, so! Very likely indeed! At your age children are apt to think their game is sure. What an admirable voice she has, so soft and yet a very good volume. She is so grave, too; I suppose you have a devotional turn?"

"I know my duty to God, and I endeavor to fulfill it."

"That is a good girl! You have a wish to be professed: is it not so?"

"I do not know my future destination, and I do not seek to pry into it."

"Upon my word, very pretty, and very

sententious! Your granddaughter is a great scholar, I dare say, Mademoiselle Rotisset?"

"She likes nothing so well as reading; she employs a part of every day in it."

"Oh! I was sure of that. But have a care she does not become a learned lady; that would be a thousand pities."

This conversation was followed by a veritable outburst of prattle, the principal topic being the neighbors. "L'Abbé Langlois is improving in health, while the pedigree of the Marchioness of Levi will prove a mystery to more than one lover of research." It is with a feeling of relief indeed that Manon realizes the visit is at an end.

"Good-bye! Don't forget to buy me a ticket in the lottery, and let your granddaughter choose the number, do you hear, Mademoiselle Rotisset? I am sure it will be lucky for me. One embrace; and you, my little heart, do not look so much on the ground. Your eyes are very good to see

with; and even one's confessor does not forbid us to open them. Ah! Mademoiselle Rotisset, you will have many a fine bow made you, take my word for that. Good morning, ladies."

Saying this, Madame de Boismorel rang her bell, ordered Lafleuvr to call in two days at Mademoiselle Rotisset's for a lottery ticket she is to send her, chided her dog for barking, and sat herself quietly on her canapé, before they were out of the room.

After spending a pleasant year in the *Ile St. Louis*, with its picturesque quays and pleasant streams, Manon returned to the bosom of her family again to resume her studies. Mr. Demure continued to give her instruction in arithmetic, geography and history. Monsieur Mignard was amazed at the wonderful progress his pupil had made on the guitar; Cajou complained that she didn't sing as he would like to have her sing. "Put soul into it!" he would exclaim. "You sing *an air* as nuns *chant an anthem*."

CHAPTER II

For nearly two years we find her acting as secretary to a Mademoiselle d'Hannaches, a tall, lanky woman with a shrill voice, whom everyone respected, however, on account of her irreproachable pedigree. Manon's duties consisted chiefly in writing letters for her and in drawing up Parliamentary petitions, a task which we imagine this little republican would rather have enjoyed. The only pleasures she was permitted during her youth seem to have consisted in walks round the Tuileries and occasionally a trip to Meudon. Her father would sometimes take her to see art galleries, of which there were a considerable number at that time. The theatre seems to have been denied her, hence, in her writings we do not find any influence of the great dramatists of the period. She

lived a life of quiet seclusion, her chief interests being music, reading and writing. Referring to an invitation to some big social event at which royalty was to be present, Marie-Jeanne writes:

“On nous a beaucoup pressés d’aller a Versailles, chez quelqu’un de connaissance. . . . Maman s’est décidée a rester. J’en suis bien aise. Toutes réflexions faites, j’aime mieux rester dans ma cellule avec mes livres, ma plume et mon violon. . . .”

When, later, she went to stay at Versailles in company with her mother, her uncle Bimont, the ugly Mlle. d’Hannaches, whose offensive hauteur and intimate knowledge of pedigrees did not leave her entirely out of place at Versailles, every opportunity was afforded her of studying the lives and habits of the aristocracy. The sumptuousness and magnificence of the court, however, impressed Manon but little. “I preferred,” she says, “seeing the statues in the gardens to the personages of the court.”

Asked if she were enjoying her visit, "Yes," she replies, "if it end speedily: a few days longer, and I shall not know what to do with my hatred."

"What harm do they do you?"

"They give me the feeling of injustice, and oblige me every moment to contemplate absurdity."

The republican and democratic ideas of the great political theorists had not failed, then, to influence this young woman, transported in her imagination back to the Halcyon days of Athens, witnessing the Olympic games and gladiatorial contests—and murmuring to herself that she had been born in France.

Her interest in the Roman Catholic religion gradually declined on leaving the *Dames de lá Congrégation*: for the last year or two she derived much pleasure in perusing these works on philosophy and political economy. She had no really fixed plan, no system, in these readings,

we are informed, her sole object being knowledge and instruction.

Now Pascal, Montesquieu and Locke; now Voltaire and Diderot; such works also as, for example, the romance of Don Quixote and Thomson's poems. One day a stonemason, coming to see Monsieur Phlipon on business, discovered Manon poring over a work on geometry. Entering into conversation with her, he advised her to obtain a book on the subject by Clairaut, one more suited to the requirements of a beginner. She purchased the book, and the next day she was hard at work making a copy of all the plates and diagrams. Algebra she also took the trouble to study, but never got beyond simple equations, finding it more profitable to feast upon a good poem than to starve herself with roots.

"Some years after," she writes, "Monsieur Roland, paying me his addresses, endeavoured in vain to revive in me this ancient taste. We made, indeed, a great

many figures, but the mode of deduction by x and y was never sufficiently attractive to fix my attention."

Her eighteenth year was not destined to be a happy one, for she suffered from an attack of smallpox, a species of this malady called "ravaglioni," as her kind physician, Doctor Missa, explained. What sorrow and anxiety are expressed, what tenderness and solicitude shown by her parents during this critical period of four months. Happily she recovered and was invited by her old friends, Monsieur and Madame Besnard, to stay with them at their country house at Fontenay, in order that she might get quite well again. A pleasant couple her host and hostess proved to be, for in their simplicity of life she compared them with Philemon and Baucis.

She was introduced to many interesting characters in the neighbourhood. First to the dissolute young Haudry, owner of the Château Soucy, heir to very fine proper-

ties and immense wealth, most of which he squandered on the courtesan La Guerre, who ultimately ruined him, much to the disgust of his relations. Then to L'Abbé Jeauket, an amateur musician who had given lessons on the harpsichord to Marie Antoinette in Vienna, who was anxious to teach her this instrument. "What a shame to be jingling a guitar, with powers to invent and execute the finest pieces on the first of instruments!" A course of instruction, however, of which her mother did not approve; and finally to the hunch-backed and toothless Madame Puisieux, the author of "*Caractères*," a work on the subject of morality, of which Manon does not seem to have particularly cared for.

The musical *soirées* of Madam l'Epine "with their grotesque characters, haughty baronesses, smart abbés, old chevaliers and young fops," caused this young lady "furiously to think." Similarly the literary assemblies of Monsieur Vase, in his badly furnished salon, illumined by a few

flickering tallow candles, where one of these minor poets would read verses dedicated to a pretty little lap-dog owned by a haughty marchioness. The concerts of the enthusiastic Baron de Back, at which the Baron would take good care to regale the company with more than one of his own compositions, found greater favor (we find) in the eyes of Madame Phlipon and her daughter than the haunt of the Literati in the Porte du Temple.

To the Opera Manon was taken but once in her life, when she witnessed The Union of Love and the Arts, by Floquet, a somewhat mystifying performance in which the *corps de ballet* appeared at the most unexpected moments. A performance of *L'Ecossaise*, produced at the Theatre Française, does not seem to have increased her interest in the drama, for which she had entertained such enthusiasm in perusing over the works of Corneille.

CHAPTER III

It was after her return from her visit to Fontenay that Monsieur and Madame Phlipon wished to select a husband for their daughter. Her innumerable suitors, finding it difficult to secure an introduction, would write to Monsieur Phlipon stating their claims. He would give these epistles to his daughter, who would draw up the answers to them briefly, later to be despatched by her father after thoroughly revising the same.

One of the first to present himself as a prospective son-in-law was Monsieur Mignard, the Spanish Colossus, who soon disclosed the fact that he was something more than a mere music teacher. He claimed to be a nobleman of Malaga, a statement which was disbelieved by the Phlipons, who forbade him to enter the

portals of the little house on the *Quai de l'Horloge* again.

Monsieur Mozon, her dancing teacher, met with a similar prohibition. Philipon, who took the greatest interest in every branch of commerce, wanted his daughter to marry a wealthy tradesman or a prosperous jeweller, a union which seemed most repugnant to a young woman of refined and romantic sentiments like Manon's. The following conversation is typical of that which took place in discussing this subject of marriage.

"Pardon me, Sir: I do not appreciate men by the color of their coats, nor have I said he must be of this profession or that, but a man that I can love."

"Yet, if I understand you right, you suppose such a man is not to be found in the whole circle of commerce?"

"I confess it appears to me difficult. I have never yet seen in that class of life an individual to my liking; besides that I have an aversion to the occupation itself."

“It is nevertheless extremely pleasant to remain quiet and undisturbed at home, while the husband is transacting his business successfully abroad. Witness Madam d’Argens; she understands diamonds as well as her husband, bargains with courtiers, and other individuals, in his absence, and would doubtless carry on the business by herself, should she be left a widow. Their fortune is already considerable, and they have a share in the company which has just made a purchase of Bagnolet. You, Manon, have an excellent understanding, and having read the treatise in my library upon precious stones, must be particularly qualified for such an occupation. Your judgment would inspire confidence; you would do with your customers what you pleased; and could you have fancied Delorme, Dabreuil, or l’Obligéois, what an agreeable life might you have led!”

“Hold, my dear father! I have too often observed that little success can be

expected from commerce, unless by selling dear what has been bought cheap, by extortion on the one hand and robbing the poor artizan of his due (dear, dear, what socialism!) on the other. Never will I give myself up to such practices, and never shall I respect the man who from morning till night can devote his time to them. I should wish to be a good and virtuous wife; but how should I preserve fidelity to a man who held no place in my esteem, admitting the possibility of my marrying such a one? To me it appears that selling diamonds and selling pastry are nearly the same thing; except that the latter has a fixed price, requires less deceit, but soils the fingers more. I like neither the one nor the other."

"Do you suppose, then, that there are no honest tradesmen?"

"I will not absolutely say that; but I am persuaded the number is small, and let them be ever so honest, they have not all that I require in a husband."

“You are extremely fastidious, methinks; but supposing you do not find this idol of your imagination?”

“Then will I live and die single.”

One day Père Phlipon made the announcement to his daughter that a young physician had been selected as her future husband. Manon was by no means displeased, for she felt that the subject of medicine would prove of interest to her. In order that the young couple might meet, a tea-party was arranged at the house of a Mademoiselle de la Barre, a rigid Jansenist with pretensions to wit. Every preparation had been made beforehand, confectionary and sweets being included amongst the pleasures of the table.

Dr. Gardanne, in extremely loquacious mood, “makes great havoc among the sugar-plums,” venturing to assert that nothing pleases him more than that which is sweet; to which Mlle. de la Barre replied with a very pointed epigram on the subject of sweetness. The young doctor

blushed and begged that the company would "excuse him, as he had other visits to pay, and bids them all good-bye."

A few days later Madam Phlipon questioned her daughter concerning the young man: "Well, what think you of this man? Will he suit you?"

"My dear Mamma, it is impossible as yet for me to tell."

"But you can certainly tell if he has inspired you with any dislike."

"Neither dislike nor inclination; so that there is still room for either of these sentiments."

"And what answer, then, is to be given, should a proposal be made in form?"

"Is the answer to be binding?"

"Assuredly, if we pass our word to a man of honor, we must adhere to it."

"And what if he should afterwards displease me?"

"A reasonable young woman, not actuated by caprice, having once maturely weighed the motives that determine her in

so important a resolution, is in no danger of changing her opinion."

"And must I really decide, then, over this single interview?"

"Not exactly that; the intimacy of Monsieur de Gardanne with our family makes it easy for us to judge of his condition, his manners, and, with a little inquiry, of his character. These are the principal points in determining your choice; the consideration of his person is a trifling business, and the seeing him a matter of form necessary to the adjustment of certain preliminaries."

"Ah! my Mamma, I am in no haste to be married."

So anxious, indeed, was Monsieur Phlippon to obtain all information concerning the social status of Dr. Gardanne that, not content with writing to one or two families in Provence, he even managed to glean a few particulars from the latter's tradesmen, in order to ascertain if he were of an economical disposition. One day he even

visited the doctor in person and delivered a stern lecture to him on the subject of morality.

In this manner the future bridegroom began to receive letters from his friends and relations, sympathizing with him in his unfortunate selection of so singular a father-in-law. Greatly incensed, he rushes off to see Mademoiselle Desportes, Manon's cousin, to inform her that the union is quite impossible owing to the conduct of this peculiar man.

Happily, these facts coming to the knowledge of Manon, she announced her intention of never speaking to Monsieur Gardanne again, and in this manner the match was broken off.

It was shortly after this time that Madame Phlipon's health began to fail; her malady, indeed, was a serious one, an attack of the palsy accompanied by a continuous cold in the head, of which her physician was never able to ascertain the cause. In addition to this misfortune, we

regret to have to state that Monsieur Phlipon had become less regular in his mode of living. He began to interest himself in hazardous commercial enterprises, to spend his evenings with undesirable company in the taverns, to indulge recklessly in games of cards and dice. The consequence was that his business began to suffer and he was soon forced to dispense with the services of some of his workmen.

On the eve of Whitsuntide, 1775, Manon had a most curious premonition of her mother's death. She dreamed that she had crossed the Seine by boat and was about to set foot on shore, when she was impeded by the figure of a corpse. Extremely terrified, she was about to examine the face more closely, when she was gently awakened by her mother bidding her rise and dress, as they were about to set out that morning for Mendon.

A few days later she had gone to see Angelica Boufflers, the Sister Agatha of

her convent days, when she suddenly felt herself impelled by some strange influence to return home.

“Why are you in such haste?” Sister Agatha asked her. “Does any one expect you?”

“No; but I feel an urgency to be near my mother.”

“You have told me that you left her well?”

“That is true, nor does she expect me; I know not what it is that torments me, but I am anxious to be with her.”

Wending her way along the *Quai*, she arrived home to find a little girl on the doorstep, who informed her that her mother had been taken seriously ill. Rushing upstairs, she found the poor woman in a state of collapse, wild-eyed and open-mouthed, her head sunk on her chest. Every effort was made to revive her with cordials, massage, and by putting salt in her mouth. Sorrowfully the physician admitted that nothing more could be done, that the end

was at hand. A priest arrived to administer extreme unction. He commenced to pray. Manon, standing at the foot of the bed with a light in her hand, was unable to withdraw her eyes from the sight of her dying mother. The light slipped from her hand, she fell senseless on the floor.

After an extremely critical period of two weeks, during which time she suffered from fearful convulsions, the doctors began to entertain hope for Manon's eventual recovery. Since her mother's death she had shown no outward signs of grief. A letter arrived from Sophia Cannel, full of gentle sympathy and tender affection, bringing with it memories of happier days. She wept, and was saved.

Carried away with grief at the loss of her mother, Manon's mental state gave cause for grave anxiety on the parts of her friends and relations. They did everything in their power to alleviate her sorrow. Daily a friendly priest, L'Abbé Legrand, came and conversed with her,

and noticing that there was a marked change for the better in her demeanor, he brought her a copy of Rousseau's "*La Nouvelle Heloise*." She began to entertain as much enthusiasm for this great author at the age of twenty-one as she had for Plutarch when she was only eight years old. "Plutarch," she writes, "had prepared me to become a republican. He roused that strength and stateliness of character which constitute one; he inspired me with a real enthusiasm in favour of public virtues and liberty. Rousseau pointed out to me the domestic happiness to which I could aspire."

In spite of the household duties incumbent on her as the result of her mother's death, she found time for studying other authors than Rousseau. Not content with reading Burdaloue and Massillon, she started to write a sermon all by herself, the subject being, "The Love of One's Neighbour." This she sent to her uncle,

now a canon at Vincennes, who was much pleased with it.

In the evenings she played piquet with her father (although she detested cards) in order to distract him from the joys of the tavern with its undesirable company. The haughty and aristocratic Madame de Boismorel (whom we have previously mentioned), whose son, now married, possessed a charming little house near Charenton, with a garden extending to the banks of the Seine, she still continued to visit. This dame had not lost any of her quondam characteristic of inquisitiveness, as is evidenced by the following conversation:

“How well your daughter looks, Monsieur Phlipon! But do you know that my son is enchanted with her? Tell me, Miss, do not you wish to be married?”

“Others have already thought for me on that subject, Madam, but I have not yet seen reason to come to any determination.”

“You are difficult, I suppose. Have you

any repugnance to a man of a certain age?"

"The knowledge I might have of a person would alone determine my attachment, my refusal, or my acception."

"Those kind of marriages have most solidity. A young man often escapes through our fingers, when one thinks him most attached!"

One day Monsieur de Boismorel and his son (a somewhat ugly youth of seventeen) Monsieur Phlipon and his daughter went to pay a visit to the shady summits of St. Gratien, to the lake, and the valley of Montmorency. Here a small cottage, once tenanted by her hero, Jean-Jacques, proved of some interest to Mademoiselle. Taking Monsieur Phlipon aside, Monsieur de Boismorel whispered:

"If my son were worthy of your daughter, I might appear singular, but I should think myself too happy!" This youth, however, did not find favour in the eyes of Manon at all; but with his sedate father,

a man of literary aspirations, she formed a sincere friendship. They even began to exchange verses of their own composition with each other.

One hot summer's day he came to visit her at her uncle's house at Vincennes, a translation of the Georgics by L'Abbé Delille under his arm: a *coup de soleil* was the result; severe headaches accompanied by fever ensue—and, alas, in a few days he died.

The gallant old Monsieur Sainte Lette, a member of the municipal council of Pondicherry, whose acquaintance Monsieur Phlipon had made in Paris, was another member of this *cercle littéraire*; he had a weakness for poetry of the lighter genre.

“Mademoiselle,” he said confidently, after reading some of her verses, “you are in the right to be on your guard, for all this will end in your writing a book!”

“It shall then be under another person's name,” she replied, “for I will eat my fingers rather than become an author.

CHAPTER IV

It was through the Cannet family that Manon was destined to meet her future husband. Monsieur Roland de la Platierè was continually hearing Henriette and Sophie allude to their "dear friend," with whom they spent such happy days at the convent. He demanded to be enlightened further and was shown a portrait of Mademoiselle Phlipon by Madam Cannet.

"Why, then," he asked, "do not you make me acquainted with this dear friend? I go to Paris every year. Cannot I have a letter to her?"

He was accordingly presented with a letter of introduction to Monsieur Phlipon, together with a note from Sophie Cannet, which ran as follows:

"Tu recevras cette lettre par le philosophe dont je t'ai quelquefois parlé, Mon-

sieur Roland, homme éclairé, de moeurs antiques, à qui on ne peut reprocher que son culte pour les anciens, son mépris pour son siècle et sa trop haute estime de sa propre vertu.” (You will receive this letter through the philosopher whom I have already mentioned to you, Monsieur Roland, an enlightened man, of excellent morals, and who cannot be reproached with anything but his great admiration for the ancients, at the expense of the moderns, whom he despises, and the foible of loving to speak too much of himself.)

For eight months or more Monsieur Roland came to see her regularly. “His frank and instructive conversation never wearied me,” she writes, “and he loved to have himself listened to with attention.” He left his manuscripts in her keeping before departing on a journey to Italy. Manon was much moved at this mark of his esteem. On the eve of his departure: “You are happy in departing,” said old Monsieur Sainte-Lette in his solemn tone,

“but make haste to return, in order to demand another.”

It was five long years, however, before Monsieur Roland made a proposition of marriage. He wrote from Amiens a letter expressing his most cherished desire to Monsieur Phlipon, by whom, we find, he was not regarded as a desirable son-in-law on account of his austerity and stiffness. He perseveres, however, and eventually marries Marie-Jeanne in the year 1780, when she was twenty-five years of age.

They spent the first year of their marriage in Paris, during which time Manon acted as her husband's secretary, assisting him in correcting manuscripts and dealing with his correspondence and dispatches. In spite of her secretarial and household duties we find that she managed to study natural history and botany. She even made a collection of the flora of Picardy during her four years sojourn in Amiens, while Roland, now Inspector-General of

Manufactures at Amiens, was engaged in writing commercial articles for the *Encyclopédié Nouvelle*. A man of excellent education, an ardent student, the Inspector-General of Manufactures had led a somewhat adventurous life. Leaving home at the age of nineteen, he had travelled through the greater part of France on foot, with hardly a penny in his pocket, eventually arriving at Nantes, where he obtained employment at a shipowner's, hoping to sail for the Indies. He was prevented from doing so, however, owing to a serious illness. On his recovery, he proceeded to Rouen, where he was fortunate enough to fall in with a relative, a Monsieur Godinot, inspector of manufactures in the same town. With the latter's influence and his own exceptional ability, he was soon appointed an inspector himself, spending his spare time in travelling through Europe and writing articles on commercial subjects for the newspapers.

After leaving Amiens in the year 1784,

the Rolands repaired to Villefranche, near Lyons, where her husband was also Inspector of Manufactures, spending some time in the country at Le Clos la Platière in the parish of Thezée, a short distance from Villefranche, the family residence of the Rolands.

His arduous duties as inspector of manufactures proving somewhat detrimental to his health, Monsieur Roland accompanied his wife on a voyage to England in 1784. They first set foot on English soil at Dover, with which they seemed to have been favorably impressed, and passed successively through Canterbury, Chatham and Rochester, arriving at London, where they took lodgings at the house of a Frenchman at the rate of three shillings a day.

Describing the city of Canterbury, Madame Roland says: "The cathedral is the only remarkable monument in Canterbury; the nave and its aisles are in the good, bold, and light Gothic order. . . . We were shown here the place where

Thomas à Becket suffered martyrdom, or paid the price of his intolerable obstinacy and haughtiness.”

Her first impressions of London: “Large villas announce the environs of the capital; at a distance is perceived, on the right, the proud Thames, with its forest of masts, the houses of London, and the dome of St. Paul’s.”

One of the first objects of their visit proved to be the old palace of Whitehall, which Charles I occupied at the time of his imprisonment, and from which he stepped out to be beheaded. The Strand, the Royal Exchange, the Bank of England, the Mansion House, Westminster Abbey, the Tower of London, even Tyburn, all were visited in turn. Impressed with the architectural beauty of St. Paul’s, Madame writes:

“In France we have nothing that can be compared to it. I have not yet been able to examine it throughout. I shall therefore visit it again.”

Architecture must have occupied Madame Roland's serious attention, probably before her marriage, for in addition to commenting on the more salient features of architectural style noticeable in the Canterbury cathedral, and in describing the Bank of England, she writes:

“The order that prevails here is Corinthian; the ornaments are delicate, the execution is neat, the details are graceful, and the whole truly in the Italian style.” The British Museum, we imagine, must have been a veritable revelation to her, with its antique vases, mummies, ancient manuscripts—the original manuscript of the Magna Charta, the primary basis of England's written constitution, under a glass case—many original letters of the Kings of England, including some of Queen Elizabeth.

Her views of the English stage at this period are interesting. In describing a visit to a theatre in the Haymarket, she writes: “It answers exactly to our *Comédie Italienne*, in which are performed

comic operas and little pieces. The music pleased me; it is simple and harmonious. Morals are very far from being respected at the theatre; great liberties are taken there in the dialogue, and even in the action; never with us are seen given on the stage kisses so lascivious as those which are represented at the Haymarket." She lays stress on the danger of the streets of London at night. Thieves, she informs us, lurked at every street corner, even daring to stop carriages in order to extort money from the occupants.

"They never assassinate, unless in case of an obstinate resistance, as happened three days ago, near the Opera House, to a musician, about midnight." If a thief were caught in *fragrante delictu* at that time, he was hanged without mercy. Madame asserts that they were hanged in batches of a dozen every month. When the aristocracy left town for the summer they usually took the precaution to send all their plate to their bankers, as they

invariably expected to find their houses broken into on their return. Travellers usually carried with them what was known as the traveller's purse, a sum deemed sufficient to satisfy the thief, should he demand money.

The Queen, she remarks, though not very prepossessing in appearance, was greatly loved and esteemed by the masses. Rarely appearing in public, the only entertainments she gave were two balls a year, at which only the minuet and the country dances were permitted, which ended punctually at midnight.

St. James's Palace does not seem, indeed, to have won her approval as a royal residence. "This miserable edifice has nothing remarkable about it," she writes. "The whole is as simple, antique and gloomy as can possibly be imagined." She is far more pleased with those fashionable rendezvous of eighteenth century society, Ranelagh and Vauxhall Gardens. Midnight was the best time apparently to visit

the former place of amusement, with its Italian music and songs set to English words, for there was no noise, no unpleasant crowds, the women parading in small batches by themselves, leaving the men to their own inclinations. She found the amusements at Vauxhall Gardens well regulated and orderly.

In visiting Richmond, then a royal residence with fine terraces and gardens, she was greatly impressed with the beauty of the view of the Thames seen from a point of vantage. A little higher up the river, at Hampton, she visited David Garrick's country house in order to see the monument to Shakespeare erected by that famous actor in his garden during his lifetime. This statue of the immortal bard was placed inside a stone temple, circular in form, of Grecian design, an honour which Madame thinks ought to have been also bestowed on Garrick by his comely widow.

Continual rain, thunder and lightning

accompanied the departure of the Rolands from London, from five o'clock in the morning until they eventually reached Dover. They had intended to cross to France by taking a boat proceeding down the Thames to Dunkirk, but finding that there was no vessel available at that time, they were compelled to remain at Dover until they were able to secure a passage to Calais.

Madame Roland's impressions of England, then, were far from being unfavorable, as is evidenced by the following extract from her memoirs: "I shall ever remember with pleasure a country of which de Lome taught me to love the Constitution, and where I have witnessed the happy effects which that Constitution has produced. Fools may chatter, and slaves may sing, but you may take my word for it that England contains men who have a right to laugh at us."

Three years later the Rolands took a trip through Switzerland. Leaving Lyons,

they travelled through La Bresse, Bugey and the Pays de Gex, ultimately arriving at Geneva, where she was extremely disappointed at not seeing any monument to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. "I was almost offended," she writes, "at not finding in Geneva the statue of Rousseau; but the defender of the right of human nature cannot appear but overcome by grief or inflamed by anger, in the midst of a debased people and its oppressors."

They also visited Monsieur Trouchin, an ex-counsellor, who resided at Délices, "a house which Voltaire's residence has rendered celebrated, which he has extolled in his verse, and to which he gave this name that it so well deserves." At Basle they visited the cathedral described as "a Gothic building of a tolerably good style." They also saw a famous work in fresco, painted on the walls of an old cloister, ascribed to the great Holbein, whose Thomas Morns and the learned Erasmus were greatly admired by Madame Roland.

CHAPTER V

WHEN the Revolution broke out on the 10th of August, 1789, the Rolands were at Villefranche. The Inspector of Manufactures, as great a lover of Rousseau and the other great political theorists as his wife was, immediately announced his intention of supporting the party of liberty. It was his intention, he declared, to further the new political ideals destined to succeed those of "*l'ancien régime.*" They now started a newspaper with the assistance of a Monsieur Champagneux, entitled the *Courier de Lyon*, most of the articles being penned by Madame Roland and subsequently signed by her husband. This paper attracted the attention of the editor of *Père Duchesne* and other journalists. In this manner the Rolands began to correspond with and to submit literary con-

tributions to Brissot and other friends of the Revolution.

Appointed deputy to the Constituant Assembly by the municipality of Lyons, she accompanied her husband to Paris in the year 1791. They returned to the country again after Roland had done everything in his power to alleviate the debts incurred by the city of Lyons. The month of December found them at Paris again, with Roland engaged in gathering material for his *Encyclopédié Nouvelle*. About this time, also, we find him attending political meetings in the *Place Vendôme*, frequenting the society of the Friends of the Constitution, and elected a member of the Jacobin club.

Madame Roland was filled with the greatest enthusiasm for the new movement, believing that she saw in the Revolution the application of those very same principles advocated by her favourite political theorists like Jean-Jacques Rousseau. She began to take the greatest interest in all the

proceedings of the National Assembly and induced her husband to invite some of the leading deputies to her house. Four times a week, she informs us, these gentlemen came to attend her salon at the Hôtel Britannique, *Rue Guénégaud*—the deputies Pétion, Louvet, Brissot, Buzot, the great leaders of the *Gironde* party. While they were engaged in discussing democratic and republican propaganda, Madame would sit in a corner of the room, writing letters, not allowing a single word of their conversation to escape her. “More than once I bit my lips,” she writes, “to keep in my own opinion.”

Robespierre, with his sour, disdainful expression, his tiresome diction and *mal-a-propos* remarks, was a constant visitor to the Hôtel Britannique. On the day of the king's flight to Varennes, Madame describes him as being petrified with terror, declaring that a massacre of the patriots, the friends of freedom, would assuredly follow. Honest Pétion, on the other hand,

observed that the occasion was a most favourable one for instituting a republic, since the king did not intend to respect the constitution. In reply, "Robespierre, with his usual sneer, and biting his nails, asked what was a republic!"

The manner in which the virtuous Roland came to be selected as Minister of the Interior in 1792 is rather a mystery. It seems clear, however, that his name had been proposed by the political committee in the Place Vendôme as a man of integrity and honour, a worthy partizan of liberty and an administrator of no mean ability. On March 23d, late at night, Dumonvieu and Brissot came to inform him that the king had been pleased to select him as minister for the home department, and Roland announced his willingness to accept the office. The first appearance of this philosophical statesman at court, with his long hair, round hat and Quaker-like mien, gave rise to a scene of veritable consternation. One of the court lackeys,

much agitated, stepped up to Dumouriez:

“Monsieur, point de boucles a ses souliers.” Dumouriez, with a tragic expression on his face: *“Monsieur, tout est perdu.”*

After being three weeks in office, the Minister of the Interior was pleased with the excellent disposition of the king in his renewed declarations of his intention to maintain the constitution. “I assure you,” says Claviere, “that the King is quite sensible, that his interest is connected with the observation of new laws.” *“Ma foi,”* cries Roland, “if he be not an honest man, he is the greatest knave in the kingdom!”

Louis XVI’s method of dealing with the political affairs of the day, as described by Madame Roland, are somewhat interesting: “As to great political affairs, he often eluded their investigation, by turning the conversation to general topics, or to subjects suited to each particular person. If war were the question, he would talk of travelling; if diplomatic concerns

were upon the carpet, he would relate the manners or inquire into the local peculiarities of the country; or if the state of affairs at home were in discussion, he would dwell upon some trifling detail of economy or agriculture. Roland he would question about his works, Dumouriez concerning anecdotes, and so on: the council chamber was converted to a coffee-room, where nothing was heard but idle conversation."

In making his declarations of policy, Roland did so in writing, in which his wife was able to give him great assistance.

"I did not interfere with his administration," she writes, "but if a circular letter, a set of instructions, or an important state paper were wanting, we talked the matter over with our usual freedom, and pregnant with my own, I took up the pen, which I had more leisure to conduct than he." It was in this manner, then, that the famous letter to Louis XVI came to be written by Madame Roland, as the re-

sult of that monarch's vacillation and duplicity.

The situation became more and more critical every day, the king encountering much opposition from Roland and Servan in his refusal to sanction the decrees against the emigrants and the clergy. As to the last-named minister: when Degraive, Minister of War, relinquished his office, great difficulty was experienced in appointing a successor, as most officers of the army were enemies of the constitution and the friends of royalty. On Roland's recommendation, his old friend Monsieur Servan was selected, for there was no reason to suspect him of royalist tendencies since he had shown a certain predilection for revolutionary principles previous to the 10th of August, 1789.

When this minister suggested to the king that twenty thousand men should be held in readiness to resist the foreign armies invading France, Louis calmly turned his back on him. A few days later

the letter, drawn up by Madame Roland and signed by her husband, was delivered into the hands of the king on the 11th of June. Servan's dismissal followed next day. Duranthon, Clavierè and Roland himself meeting with similar treatment shortly afterwards.

Roland read the letter, nevertheless, to the Assembly, and had it printed and circulated everywhere. It caused disaffection throughout the whole of France. The whole affair, indeed, was the prelude to the fall and dethronement of the king. Later Roland was recalled to power, together with Servan and Clavierè. Monge was appointed to the marine department, Le Brun to foreign affairs, while Danton completed the ministry. The latter was a constant visitor at the Roland's, together with Fabre d'Eglantine. She does not seem to have formed a very agreeable impression of Danton, comparing him in her imagination, as she does, to a kind of Sardanapalus, encouraging in harsh tones a

band of assassins to commit atrocious crimes.

"I never saw anything," she declares, "that so perfectly characterized the violence of brutal passions, and the most astonishing audacity, half cloaked under a jovial air, with the affectation of frankness and a sort of simplicity." Fabre d'Eglantine tried to interest the Rolands in a new journal of his entitled, "*Compte rendu au Peuple souverain*" (An Account to the Sovereign People), without success, however, for he had not sufficient funds to start it, until the Assembly had voted two million livres for "secret expenses."

It is of such leaders as Robespierre, Danton and Marat that Roland began to entertain the greatest suspicions. He disapproved of the policy of the Montagnards, the extremist party, whose principal object was to gain complete control over the government of Paris. Shortly after the flight and arrest of the king at Varennes he publicly denounced those responsible

for the horrible massacres in the prisons on the 2d and 3d of September.

In this manner the other ministers began to ridicule him, declaring that he had no will of his own and was entirely influenced by his wife.

When Roland had announced his intention of resigning from the ministry the other ministers earnestly begged him to reconsider his decision. "If we give an invitation to Roland," exclaimed Danton in the Assembly, "we must give one to his wife, too. I know all the virtues of the minister, but we want men who see otherwise than by their wives."

No other course, indeed, seems to have been open to this unfortunate man. He was heartily disliked for his probity and integrity by the Montagnards, who were determined to bring about his fall by any means in their power. Numerous accusations had been brought against him from time to time, without success, however, for no definite proofs were forthcoming. He

was even accused of having destroyed some documents kept in the treasury, containing undoubted proofs of Louis's designs against the Revolutionary party. At the trial of this monarch he had demanded, with the Girondist deputies, that the sentence should be pronounced by a vote of the whole people, and not simply by the Convention.

Disgusted at length with the atrocious acts of the Montagnards, and convinced of the feebleness of the moderate party, Madam Roland induced him to resign office, which he did on January 23, 1793, two days after the king's execution.

The Rolands still remained in Paris, however, in their apartments in the *Rue de la Harpe*, subject to fresh insults and calumnies, their principal adversaries being Marat and Montagne. An accusation was now brought against the wife of the ex-minister, charging her with having entered into correspondence with the English Minister. With great presence of

mind, giving vent to her wonderful eloquence, with occasional sallies of wit, she managed to baffle her accusers.

On the 31st of May, at half-past five in the evening, a band of armed men was sent by the Revolutionary Committee with orders to arrest Monsieur Roland. His faithful wife's first act was to hurry to the Convention in order to demand his release. In vain did she endeavor to obtain admission through Deputy Vergnaux. A decree was being formulated, he explained; nothing can be done for several hours. Crossing the Court of the Tuileries, now swarming with troops, she drove to the house of Monsieur Louvet, where she left a note informing him of all that had occurred.

It was nearly midnight before she ultimately returned to her house in the Rue de la Harpe. She was in the act of writing a note to her husband, when a knock was heard at the door. It was an officer and

escort. In reply to their inquiries for Roland:

“He is not at home.”

“But where can he be? When will he return? You know his way of life, and can judge when we may expect him.”

“I know not whether your orders authorize you to put such questions to me; but this I know, that nothing can oblige me to answer them. . .”

The officer withdrew, sullen and dissatisfied. Early next morning, however, she was herself put under arrest. “Where is your authority?” Madame demanded.

“Here,” a man replied, handing her a mandate signed by the Comité d’insurrection.

She utterly refused to acknowledge the legality of this procedure.

“Here is another order!” exclaimed little Monsieur Nicaud, producing one signed by the Commune.

A Justice of the Peace having now arrived, every article of furniture in her

apartments was sealed up in his presence, while a noisy, evil-smelling crowd passed to and fro in the meantime through her rooms, examining everything that excited their curiosity.

“The air became loaded with noisome exhalations,” she writes, “and I was obliged to retire to the window of the anti-chamber to get breath.” At seven o’clock in the morning, after bidding her daughter Eudora an affectionate adieu, she left her house and was conveyed in a coach to the Abbey Prison, passing through crowds *en route* who cried:

“To the guillotine!”

A few hours after her arrival at the prison she was visited by the worthy Grandpré. “There is not an instant to be lost,” he declared. She must write to the Convention immediately demanding her release. She accordingly wrote as follows:

“CITIZENESS ROLAND TO THE NATIONAL
CONVENTION

“Prison of the Abbey, June 1, 1793.

“Legislators! I have just been torn

from my home, from the arms of my daughter, a girl of twelve years of age, and I am detained in the Abbey, by virtue of orders which alleged no cause for my being apprehended. These orders were issued by a revolutionary committee; and some commissioners of the commune, who accompanied those of the committee, showed me others from the general council, which also alleged none. Thus I am presumed a culprit by the public. I was conducted to prison with great parade, in the midst of an ostentatious guard and of a misled people, some of whom called loudly for the scaffold; without my conductors being able to announce to any one, or inform myself, for what reason I was supposed a criminal, and treated accordingly.

“This is not all. The bearer of the orders of the commune made no use of them except with me, and to make me sign a statement of what passed. When I quitted my apartment I was delivered to the commissioners of the revolutionary committee;

these conducted me to the Abbey; and on their mandate alone was I received into it.

“An attested copy of the mandate, signed by a single individual possessing no office, I have subjoined. Everything in my house has been sealed up. Whilst this was doing, which continued from three o’clock in the morning till seven, the crowds of citizens filled my apartment; and if, amongst the number, were present any malicious person, who entertained a design of privately slipping papers calculated to throw on me the imputation of guilt, into a library open in all parts, he could not fail of opportunity.

“Yesterday the same committee had already sought to put under arrest the late Minister, whom the laws render accountable to you alone for the acts of his administration, and who has been incessantly soliciting you to pass on them your judgment. Roland protested against the order, and the bearers of it withdrew. He left his house alone, to spare Error a crime,

whilst I had repaired to the convention, to give it information of these attempts; but I procured a letter to be transmitted to the president to no purpose, for it was not read.

“I went to demand justice and protection. I demand them again, with fresh claims, for I, too, am now oppressed. I demand of the convention to order an account of the cause and the manner of my being apprehended to be laid before it; and to decide upon them. If it confirm my arrest, I appeal to the law, which ordains the enunciation of the crime, and the examination of the prisoner within twenty-four hours from the hour of his capture. Finally I demand a report on the account of that irreproachable man, who exhibits an instance of persecution unheard of before, and who seems destined to give nations the terrible lesson of virtue prescribed by the blindness of prejudice.

“If to have shared the strictness of his

principles, the energy of his courage, and the ardour of his love of liberty be my crime, I plead guilty, and await my punishment. Give sentence, legislators:

“France, freedom, the fate of the republic, and of yourselves, depend necessarily this day on the distribution of that justice which it is yours to dispense.”

The next day she wrote to Garat, who had succeeded Roland as Minister of the Interior, urging him to exercise his influence on her behalf. In spite of the clamour and confusion in the courtyard outside, the incessant roll of drums, the ringing of the alarm-bell, she managed to while away the time by studying Hume’s “History of England.” Thomson’s “Seasons” also gave her several hours of intellectual delight.

The kind-hearted Boce brought her flowers from the Jardin des Plantes, in such profusion, indeed, that Lavacquerie, the keeper, declared that he would name her cell the “Pavilion of Flora.” Lavacquerie

was most attentive and obliging to her.

“What will you choose for breakfast?” he would inquire.

“A little capillaire,” Madame replied.

The window of her cell was situated unfortunately just over the sentry guarding the prison gate. All night long she heard:

“Who goes there?—Guard!—Kill him!—Patrole!” uttered in stentorian tones.

The first morning of her incarceration she read in the newspaper that the twenty-two Girondist deputies had been proscribed.

“My country is lost!” she exclaimed in accents of despair and grief. She was relieved to see in the Monitor, however, that the Beaurepaire section had protested against her imprisonment. She wrote to them, enclosing a copy of the letter sent to the Convention, which had been delivered through Garat, she explained, but not read. On the advice of Grandpre, she also communicated with Gohier, the Minister of Justice.

CHAPTER VI

FOUR weeks passed in this manner, occupied chiefly in writing memoirs and other literary works, in spite of the noise and confusion without, accompanied by the bawling of hawkers employed by Hebert (the editor of *Pere Duchesne*), uttering fresh insults and calumnies under her very window.

At noon on the 24th of June, an administrator appeared with the order for her release. The news did not come as a surprise. She was extremely happy.

“Do you know where Mr. Roland is at present?” asked the officer in a somewhat off-hand manner.

The vagueness of Madame’s reply may be imagined as she retired to her room to dress.

After quitting her cell, she engaged a

coach and drove to the Rue de la Harpe with all speed. She was about to enter the house when someone addressed her:

“Citizeness Roland!”

She turned to find two rough-looking men behind her.

“What do you want?” she asked.

“In the name of the law, we arrest you!”

Her feelings may well be imagined. Much disheartened and disgusted, she accompanied her captors to the “*Mairie*,” where a conference took place between the police administrators and other officials. Much to their confusion, she forced her way into the room, but was compelled to withdraw, crying:

“Commissioners of the section of Beaurepaire, I give you notice that they are taking me away.”

“We cannot help it; but the section will not forget you; it will take care that you be examined.”

The brainless Joubert now confessed that her first arrest was really illegal; she

had been set free, he explained, so that the legality of the procedure should not be called into question.

In silence she accompanied the police officials to the coach waiting to take her to the odious prison of Sainte-Pélagie.

She had not been at liberty more than three hours. At her new place of confinement she was provided with better accommodation and more wholesome food. Finding the prison diet did not agree with her, Madame Bouchard, the gaoler's wife, agreed to cook all her meals—simple fare, indeed, consisting of a mutton chop and vegetables for dinner, and a salad usually for supper. She bought crayons and occupied a great deal of her time in drawing, and read Shaftesbury's "Essay on Virtue"; also her favourite Thomson.

Her old friend Monsieur Champagneu, who visited her in prison, in his preface to her published memoirs, writes:

"I had greatly admired her in the other moments of her life, but I knew not her

real value till I saw her under bolts and bars. What dignity she carried into her prison! She was there as on a throne. . .”

This old gentleman frequently brought her fruit and pastry, with which she was greatly pleased. Her prison associates were of the most undesirable class:

“I dwell in the midst of murderers and women of the town. By the side of me is one of those creatures who make a trade of seduction, and set up innocence for sale; and above me is a woman guilty of forging assignats, who, with a band of monsters, to which she belongs, tore an individual of her own sex to pieces upon the highway.”

The Beaurepaire section now formed a plan for her escape, but she said:

“Non, je réveillerais la fureur des ennemis de mon mari; je resterai ici, telle est ma résolution.”

During the excessive heat of the month of July, she spent most of her time in Madame Bouchard’s apartment, where

she had a *forte piano* installed. She finally left her gloomy cell altogether for a more desirable room underneath the gaoler's quarters, where they brought her books, pen and paper—and the *forte piano*.

“Thus,” she writes, “was I delivered from the shocking company which for three weeks had been my greatest torment.”

One day, however, an administrator of police discovered this pleasant retreat. To his complaint that Madame Roland's quarters were too comfortable, the keeper's wife replied that she was indisposed, and occasionally amused herself with a *forte piano*, for which there was not room in a cell.

“She must do without,” rejoined this unfeeling official. “Send her this very day into a corridor. It is your business to maintain equality.”

In this manner, then, was she forced to return to her gloomy cell again. She received some consolation, however, in meet-

ing her old friend, Madame Pétion, wife of the Girondist leader.

“I little thought,” said Madame Roland, “that we should keep our sad anniversary at Sainte Pelagie, and that the fall of the throne would lead to our disgrace.”

On the 1st of October, 1793, Madame Roland was conveyed in a bed lent to her by a fellow prisoner, to the Conciergerie. This was the same day on which Brissot and the other Girondist deputies were sent to the scaffold. Here, amongst her other fellow prisoners, she made the acquaintance of Comte Beugnot and the Marquise de Créquy. The former, in his memoirs, informs us that on her arrival at the Conciergerie she was between thirty-five and forty years of age.

“Elle avait la figure, non pas régulièrement belle, mais très agréable, de beaux cheveux blonds, les yeux bleus et bien ouverts. Elle relevait encore l’harmonie de sa voix par des gestes pleins de noblesse et de vérité, par l’expression de ses yeux,

qui s'animaient avec le discours." She combined with these rare gifts, he continues, a pleasing character; her knowledge of literature and political economy, he observes, was very considerable.

The Count saw this wonderful woman just as she was leaving her chamber in order to appear before the tribunal, and was enabled to convey a message to her from a friend during the course of a few minutes' conversation. She was looking happier than usual, he says, with plenty of colour in her cheeks and a smile on her lips. With one hand she was holding the train of her dress, the other she was extending to a crowd of women, which they were kissing ardently. Words cannot describe this scene, the Count assures us. Madame Roland replied to them all in terms of the greatest affection, begging them not to lose courage but to assist each other in this terrible hour of misfortune. While Fontenay, the old gaoler, was opening the

wicket for her, weeping copiously, the Count delivered his message.

She was thanking him in a few words and in a calm tone, when she was interrupted by the entry of two turnkeys, informing her that she must accompany them immediately to the tribunal.

Taking the Count by the hand: "*Adieu, Monsieur,*" she said in a low voice, "*faisons la paix, il en est temps.*" Raising her eyes, she perceived that he was greatly moved and almost on the verge of tears.

"*Du courage!*" she whispered, and then, turning to the two turnkeys, she signified that she was ready to accompany them.

The description of her interview with the Marquise de Créquy is extremely interesting also. "The next day, at daylight, I heard my door open and I saw, instead of the familiar face of our turnkey, a woman peering rather discreetly round the corner, saying:

"*'Citizeness, might I have the pleasure of a little chat with you?'*"

“ ‘Enter,’ I said. ‘Enter, Madame,’ and as the only chair in the room was covered with my clothes, she came and sat down on the foot of my bed. She was so pale and wan that it was with difficulty that I recognized her. She remained silent a few minutes, looking at me with the saddest expression imaginable on her face.

“ ‘Do you not feel the discomfort of sleeping on such a hard couch, with so little protection against the cold?’ she said to me. Then, without waiting for me to answer, she began to discuss the imminent danger to which the republic was exposed, also the fate of the twenty-two Girondists. She actually wanted to write to Robespierre, to reproach him for his perfidy, to put him to shame, she declared.

“ ‘You would be an extremely clever woman to put Robespierre to shame; and precious little satisfaction would you obtain in making such an attempt! You should be aware, like all the other prisoners, of the fact that the surest way of

being sent suddenly to the scaffold is to write to this man, to draw his attention in any way whatever. I could give you twenty instances or more; for example, the case of the Prince de Salm, who wrote a most humble, nay, rather, a cringing letter to Robespierre, in spite of the advice of his friends, and was sent to the scaffold two days later. Imagine what would happen to you should you send a letter reproaching him for his conduct! For God's sake do nothing of the kind!

“ ‘*Vous êtes une femme supérieure,*’ she then said to me in a commiserating tone. ‘I will mention you in my memoirs!’

“ ‘Would you care to do me a service, and give me pleasure at the same time?’ I replied as severely and gravely as I possibly could.

“ ‘*Sans aucun doute, Citoyenne!*’

“ ‘Don’t mention me in your memoirs, and don’t write a letter of my name on your papers, for they may be seized at any

moment by the Committee of General Security or Public Safety.'

"'You are afraid of death, then!' she replied with a kind of austere irony and with an indefinable air of scorn."

The marchioness thereupon informed Madame Roland that she was the mother of a family and warned her not to imperil the lives of her friends.

"*Hélas! ne suis-je pas mère aussi?*" she replied, bursting into tears.

"And it would be difficult to describe to you with what eloquence, with what a veritable outburst of affectionate grief, she spoke to me of her daughter. She was no longer the republican leader, the encyclopedian sophist, but a tender woman, a Christian mother."

Monsieur Chaveau de la Garde, her lawyer, often came to see her at the Conciergerie in order to discuss her coming trial. Just before her last appearance before the tribunal, she drew a ring off her finger and gave it to him, saying: "*Ne venez pas*

demain au tribunal ce serait vous perdre sans me sauver; acceptez le seul gage que ma reconnaissance puisse vous offrir . . . demain je m'existerai plus."

In order to eventually outwit her enemies she even procured some opium, but for some reason she never made use of it. Tacitus appears to have been her favourite author during her five weeks' imprisonment there. "*Je ne puis dormir,*" she wrote; "*sans avoir lu quelques morceaux de lui; il me semble que nous voyons de même.*" ("I cannot sleep without having read some of his passages; we appear to have the same views in common.")

CHAPTER VII

At her trial she appeared dressed entirely in white, her long black hair reaching down to her waist. The documents relating to her trial bear the date of the 11th Brumaire, Year 2 of the Revolution, in which she is described as Marie-Jeanne Phlipon, wife of Roland; age 39; born at Paris; living there in the Rue de la Harpe.

First of all she was questioned as to whether certain persons, e.g.: Vergniaud, Guadet, Duperret and others known as Brissotines, Girondists, had been in the habit of coming to her house; and had not conferences taken place there, discussions of the departmental force, the means of marching it to Paris, etc. While admitting that these deputies had come to visit her regularly, she denied that any such meetings had taken place.

She was then accused of having entered into private correspondence with Barbaroux, Lauze-Duperret, and other traitors who had raised insurrection in the departments of the Eure and of Calvados. In reply she admitted having corresponded with Lauze-Duperret, requesting him to communicate her grievances to the national convention; she had trusted him, she declared, because she saw in him "a degree of courage." These letters to Deputy Lauze-Duperret having been produced and signed by Madame Roland and other members of the tribunal, the trial was suspended till a later date.

On the 13th of the same month the interrogatory was resumed. The prosecuting counsel opened the proceedings by making unpleasant insinuations against the honor of the accused, as proved by certain passages contained in letters written by Deputy Lauze-Duperret to the same. The former charge of having been instrumental in raising insurrections in the depart-

ments of the Eure and of Calvados was also maintained. Though carried away at times by her eloquence, her answers were most explicit and clear. Annoyed at her clever and evasive manner in replying to the questions put to her, Fouquier-Tuiville, the public prosecutor, ordered her to answer merely yes or no.

In order to give an idea of the nature of the proceedings, we will give an extract from an official account of the same:

“Of her asked, whether it was not she who compiled the letters which Roland wrote. Answered, ‘I never lent my thoughts to my husband, but he may sometimes have borrowed my pen.’

“Of her asked, whether at the time of Roland’s ministry, the latter did not establish an office known under the name of Office of Public Spirit; to bring to Paris a Departmental force; to tear the Republic to pieces, according to the plans of a liberticide faction, etc.; did not she conduct the business of that office? Answered, ‘That

never to her knowledge any office of that name was established by Roland; nor did she conduct the direction of the same.'

"After the decree, passed at the end of August, charging Roland to circulate useful writings, Roland had assigned to some of his clerks the care of forwarding them. His sole object had been to inspire the public with a love of revolutionary principles, in addition to maintaining order and peace. This was called the Patriotic Correspondence. That he was desirous of maintaining order and peace was clear from his own writings."

Throughout the entire proceedings, Fouquier-Tinville, the public prosecutor, put such unpleasant questions to the accused, following them up with such insulting epithets, that she was soon reduced to the verge of tears. Among the witnesses to be called was her daughter Eudora's governess, Madeleine Mignot.

The testimony of this odious old woman was alone sufficient to seal her mistress'

fate. She is described in the records as a musician and teacher of the harpsichord, living at No. 8, Rue de Bicore. After stating that many of the Girondist deputies were in the habit of often coming to dine at the Rolands, she described how Brissot had hurriedly entered the room, exclaiming: "You don't know, you folks here, that the siege of Lille is raised?" To which her mistress had replied: "I know, I know the good news." During the month of May, also, the Rolands, she asserted, had shown much tranquillity at the approach of civil war, for which they seemed to wish for: they had even tried to ascertain whether she were a loyal republican or not.

The other two witnesses were Louis Lecoq, Monsieur Roland's servant, thirty-three years of age, by trade a potter, living in the Rue de la Tannerie, No. 6; Marie-Catherine Fleury, Mrs. Roland's cook, thirty-four years of age, living in the Rue de la Harpe, No. 51.

From the former, the prosecuting counsel could obtain little information beyond that the Rolands, in fear of assassination, had slept from home once or twice. A good and faithful servant to the Rolands, his one wish was to share his mistress' fate—which he was destined to do.

Madame Fleury was so confused and bewildered with these legal proceedings that she was soon dismissed from the trial as not being in her right mind.

From the nature of the proceedings, it soon became evident that Madame Roland had been selected as one of the many victims of the revolutionary tribunal. Accordingly, after a somewhat lengthy trial, she was condemned to death for having conspired against the unity and indivisibility of the republic, as proved by the correspondence seized at the residence of Deputy Laurez-Duperret.

Late in the afternoon of November 8th, Madame Roland quitted her prison cell, accompanied by two gaolers who escorted

her to the tumbrel, waiting to convey her to the Place de la Révolution. She was not destined to make that terrible journey from the Conciergerie to the Place de la Révolution alone. She was accompanied by a poor old man, a certain Lamarque, an assignat printer. Perceiving the piteous condition he was in, faced by the prospect of the horrible fate awaiting them, she endeavored to inspire him with courage, even bringing a smile to his lips.

Arriving at the scaffold, she said to Lamarque: "You go first; you could not endure the sight of seeing me die first."

Samson, the executioner, informed her that this would be impossible. It was against his orders.

"Could you," she asked him with a smile, "refuse a lady's last request?"

Samson, then, was unable to turn a deaf ear to such an entreaty.

As she was being buckled to the plank, her eyes happened to light on a large

statue of Liberty, which had been erected close to the scaffold.

Murmuring: "*O Liberté, comme on t'a jouée,*" the dreadful instrument descended, severing the head of the most noble woman in France.

In this manner, then, was committed the greatest crime of the Reign of Terror. The deplorable loss which France had sustained in the death of Madame Roland was not realized during that terrible epoch, nor even later. Her fate does not appear to have excited the smallest interest, the smallest pity. No remonstrance was raised in the journals of the day, nor did anyone dare to point out the iniquity of the act. Some journals openly expressed approval of her murder, e.g.: The *Moniteur* (No. 59, 19th November, 1793) contains an odious attack on Madame Roland.

"Within a short period the revolutionary tribunal has given to women a great example, which will not be lost upon them: for justice, ever impartial, incessantly

makes severity and example go hand in hand.

“Marie Antoinette, etc.

Olympe de Gouges, etc.

“Roland’s wife, a philosopher in a small way, the queen of the moment, surrounded by mercenary writers, to whom she gave suppers, and distributed favours, places and money, was a monster in every point of view.” (L. A. Champagneux, *Memoires de Mme. R.*)

Perhaps the finest lasting tribute to her memory may be found in the words of Carlyle: “Noble white vision, with its high queenly face, its soft proud eyes, long black hair flowing down to the girdle; and as brave a heart as ever beat in a woman’s bosom! Like a white Grecian statue, serenely complete, she shines in that black wreck of things;—long memorable!”

Of her writings, the most famous are her personal memoirs, *L’Appel à l’impartiale*

postérité, Notices Historiques, Portrait et Anecdotes and five letters to her lover Buzot. Of her earlier works the best known are her “*Voyage en Angleterre et en Suisse*” and “*Opuscules,*” dealing with such subjects as the soul, morality, friendship, old age, etc.

CHAPTER VIII

ON receiving news of his wife's death, Roland was prostrated with grief. It was impossible for him, he felt, to survive the wife he had so dearly loved. Having resolved, therefore, to take his own life, he took into his confidence the faithful friends in whose house he had found an asylum since the 24th of June. The first suggestion that Roland made was that he should return to Paris incognito, appear before the Convention and demand that he should die on the scaffold as his wife had done. The second, that he should walk a few miles into the country and commit suicide. After some consideration he realized that should he adopt the former course, his property would be confiscated, leaving his only daughter Eudora in very poor circumstances. He therefore decided to com-

mit suicide. It was six o'clock in the evening when he set out along the Rouen-Paris road. After walking about four leagues, near the village of Beaudoin, he turned off into an avenue off the main road and sat down by the wayside. He held a sword-stick in his hand. After a few moments' deliberation he suddenly drew the sword and plunged it into his breast.

The next day he was discovered by some peasants, leaning against a tree, "as if asleep." Some papers were found in the dead minister's pockets, one of which ran as follows: "Whoever thou art who findest me here lying, respect my remains; they are those of a man who devoted his whole life to be useful, and who died as he lived, virtuous and honest. . . These massacres can be dictated only by the most cruel enemies of France. . . . Not fear, but indignation, made me quit my retreat at the moment when I learnt that my wife had been murdered. I did not choose to

remain longer in a land stained with crimes.”

Thus died a man who, in spite of his staid and Puritanical principles, might have become, with his probity and integrity, his great administrative ability, the saviour of France.

The only surviving daughter of the Rolands, Eudora, lived for many years under the kind protection of Madame Creuzé-la-Touche, ultimately marrying Monsieur Champagneux, the son of her mother's esteemed friend, the editor of the *Courier de Lyon*.

As to Madame Roland's lover, Buzot, François Nicholas Léonard Buzot, whose morals she compares to those of Socrates, his politeness to that of Scipio, had he met the same fate as the other twenty-two Girondist deputies? Since the outbreak of the Revolution, this man had soon incurred the hatred of the Montagnard party, especially of Danton and Robespierre, who accused him of “moderantisme” and “roy-

alisme.” He had disproved this, however, by issuing a decree to the effect that “the penalty of death should be inflicted on *émigrés* returning to France (October 23d), that “the death penalty should be inflicted on anyone proposing the re-establishment of royalty” (October 24th).

A staunch friend to the Gironde party till the last, he had been proscribed together with the other Girondist deputies on the 31st of May, but managed to escape. Making his way to Normandy, he had endeavored to raise an insurrection (*L'insurrection de l'Eure et Calvados*) against the Convention, which had been speedily quelled, however.

A motion was then brought forward in the Convention that Buzot should be outlawed. A decree was also issued that his house was to be pulled down and that a stake should be placed on the site, bearing this inscription: “*Là fut la maison du roi Buzot.*”

The unfortunate man had then fled to

Brittany with the Girondists Louvet, Péthion and others, ultimately finding an asylum at Bordeaux in company with Péthion. They were soon forced to quit Bordeaux, however, as their enemies had obtained knowledge of their hiding-place. After wandering about the south of France in a half-starved condition, they were both found dead one day in a cornfield near Castillon, half-eaten by wolves.

*Authentic Documents (Contained in Cham-
pagneux's edition of Madame
Roland's Memoirs)*

Decree of the Administration of the Police of Paris, of the 24th of June, 1793, for setting at liberty Citizeness Roland.

The keepers of the Abbey shall set at liberty Citizeness Roland, wife of the ex-minister, apprehended by virtue of an order of the revolutionary committee of this city, against whom, after her interrogatory, we have found nothing that can war-

rant her detention in the prison of the Abbey; in consequence we beg Citizen Godard, our colleague, to cause the said order for her being set at liberty to be carried into execution.

The Administrators in the Police Department.

Signed, *Louvet* and *Jobert*.

The following order was being issued at the same moment:

By the Law

On the 24th of June, 1793, the second year of the republic, we administrators of the police, etc.

Require and direct Citizens Guiard and Betremieux, inspectors of police, to apprehend, wherever they shall find her, Citizeness Roland, as a suspected woman, in the terms of the law, and to carry her to the prison called Sainte Pélagie. We hereby authorize the keeper of the said prison to receive her, and charge him with

all responsibility, till by us it shall be otherwise ordered. We require the armed force to lend assistance towards the execution of the present order.

The Administrators in the Police Department.

Signed,

Michonis, Louvet, Jobert, and Godard.

The following extract from a document throws some light on the efforts of the Beaurepaire section to save Madame Roland on her release from the Abbey prison: "On the declarations made to the committee by Citizen Cauchois, the younger, that some commissioners had presented themselves at his house, in order to apprehend Citizeness Roland, we commissioners appointed for the purpose of superintending the execution of the different decrees of the section of Beaurepaire, relative to the safety of persons, went immediately to the house of Citizen Cauchois, in whose apartment we found Citizeness Roland,

and the two citizens charged to put into execution the order decreed against the said citizeness." (Citizen Cauchois was subsequently executed for trying to protect Madame Roland, while his father died of grief.)

MADAME ROLAND

- 1732 Birth of Monsieur Jean-Marie Roland de
Platiere.
- 1754 17th March. Birth of Marie-Jeanne
Phlipon.
- 1765 7th May. She enters a convent.
- 1775 7th June. Her mother dies.
- 1780 Monsieur Roland marries her at the age
of 25.
- 1784 They go to reside at Villefranche near
Lyon.
- 1784 The voyage to England.
- 1787 The trip to Switzerland.
- 1791 15th December. They go to reside at
Paris.
- 1792 March 23d. Roland is appointed Minis-
ter of the Interior.
- 1793 January 23d. He resigned office.
May 31st. The twenty-two Girondist
deputies are proscribed. An attempt is
made to arrest Roland.
June 1st. Madame Roland is committed
to the Abbey prison.

June 24th. She is released. Three hours later she is taken to the prison of Sainte Pélagie.

October 1st. She is taken to the Conciergerie. The Girondist deputies are executed.

November 8th. Execution of Madame Roland.

November 15th. Roland commits suicide near Rouen.

